

Message Text

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TO USLO PEKING PRIORITY

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA, ETRD, CH, US

SUBJECT: TRAVEL OF USDA SCIENTIST DR. JAMES A. HOFFMAN

1. CEROILFOOD RECENTLY NOTIFIED GRAIN EXPORTERS DREYFUS AND CARGILL THAT SEVERAL SHIPMENTS OF US WESTERN WHEAT HAVE BEEN QUARANTINED IN PORT IN NORTHEAST CHINA BECAUSE THEY CONTAIN FUNGUS SPORE KNOWN AS WHEAT SMUT (TILLETIA CONTRAVERSA KUHN, OR TCK). CEROILFOOD ASKED DREYFUS AND CARGILL TO TAKE MEASURES TO ALLEVIATE PROBLEM, INCLUDING IMMEDIATE DISPATCH OF TEAM TO INCLUDE EXPERT ON CROP DISEASES. BESIDES WANTING TO RESOLVE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM (WE UNDERSTAND FOUR DREYFUS AND TWO CARGILL SHIPS ARE CURRENTLY DETAINED IN PORT), THE FIRMS ARE ANXIOUS NOT TO JEOPARDIZE FUTURE US WHEAT SALES AND TO MAINTAIN FLEXIBILITY ON TYPES OF WHEAT SHIPPED.

2. AT THEIR REQUEST, AND WITH CEROILFOOD APPROVAL, USDA IS PROVIDING SERVICES OF DR. JAMES A. HOFFMANN, RESEARCH LEADER, CEREAL CROP PATHOLOGY, CROPS RESEARCH LABORATORY, AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE, WESTERN REGION. PRCLO ISSUED VISA AND DR. HOFFMANN LEFT WASHINGTON SEPTEMBER 24.

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HE WILL ARRIVE IN PEKING VIA PIA THURSDAY AFTERNOON

SEPTEMBER 27. HE WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY DREYFUS VICE
PRESIDENT JOHN ANTONIUS (AMCIT). ANTONIUS HAS MADE FOUR

PREVIOUS TRIPS TO PRC.) JEREMY LANG (UK CITIZEN) OF
TRADAX TOKYO, CARGILL'S JAPANESE AFFILIATE, WILL JOIN
HOFFMANN AND ANTONIUS IN PEKING.

3. HOFFMANN'S TRIP EXPENSES WILL BE REIMBURSED BY CARGILL
AND DREYFUS, BUT HE WILL REMAIN ON USDA SALARY. HE IS
TRAVELLING ON OFFICIAL PASSPORT. DEPT AND USDA SUPPORT
HOFFMAN VISIT AND REQUEST USLO ASSISTANCE AS APPROPRIATE.
HE WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH USLO SHORTLY AFTER ARRIVAL

4. USDA INFORMS US THAT TCK IS FAIRLY COMMON IN US
WESTERN WHITE WHEAT, AND THAT IT IS NON-TOXIC--ALTHOUGH
US MILLERS NORMALLY WASH THIS WHEAT BEFORE PROCESSING
INTO FLOUR. AT CHINESE REQUEST, USDA HAD PROVIDED
CERTIFICATION THAT THESE SHIPMENTS WERE "SUBSTANTIALLY
FREE" OF THIS FUNGUS. THIS CERTIFICATION IS NOT NORMALLY
REQUIRED FOR EXPORT OF US GRAIN AND USDA DOES NOT MAKE A
DEFINITIVE FINDING THAT A PARTICULAR SHIPMENT IS FREE FROM
TCK. WHEAT EXPORTERS BELIEVE CHINESE ARE NOT
FAMILIAR WITH THIS FUNGUS AND ONE OF MAJOR PURPOSES OF
HOFFMAN VISIT IS INFORMATIONAL; HE WILL BE BRINGING BOOKS,
SCIENTIFIC PAPERS, ETC. IN ADDITION, IT IS HOPED THAT
HOFFMAN WILL INSPECT WHEAT CARGOES AND VERIFY EXISTENCE
OF TCK, DISCUSS INSPECTION TECHNIQUES WITH CHINESE AND
ADVISE THEM ON TREATMENT AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES USED IN
US. RUSH

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